

Our public education system works well. It meets the needs of most of our children. But one size does not fit all. Vouchers are educational scholarships for the small number of children whose families feel a private school best meets their needs. Governor Huntsman signed the program into law because scholarships help children.

All families, no matter what their means, should have a choice in how to educate their children. Most children do well in Utah public schools, but some fall through the cracks. Sometimes a different school would help those children learn and reach their full potential. If parents of these children are wealthy, they already have a choice. But if they are not financially well off, the children are locked in a system where they are failing. Scholarships will help level the field, giving educational opportunities to families with limited resources. The scholarship amount is scaled based on income, so families with the least means will receive the largest scholarship.

These scholarships give all families in Utah a choice when it comes to their own children's education. That's why the legislature passed, and Governor Huntsman signed into law, the Parent Choice in Education Act. A YES vote on Citizen's State Referendum 1 will let parents decide what's best for their kids.

Bureaucrats and liberal unions oppose this law. This law is not about them. It's about parents and it's about letting children have an education that works for them. It's also about avoiding a future tax increase. With 150,000 new children entering Utah schools in the next decade, it is almost inevitable that taxes will be raised to pay for those students. The availability of scholarships helps divert some of those children to private schools, using funds that were never part of the public education budget. Plus, these scholarships will actually increase the amount of money that goes to public education.

For every child that uses a scholarship, money is sent to the public school district where she would have attended. Yes, though you might not have heard this part of the story, the district gets money as if the child were attending the public schools. This is additional money put into the public education system. The scholarship program pumps new money into education while reducing class size. And it helps prevent a tax increase. Vote YES on Citizen's State Referendum 1 to guard against tax increases.

We grapple with complex issues in a large educational system. Parent choice in their child's education is just one piece of the puzzle but it is an important piece. Scholarships give every family a choice. They will help children get an individualized education that meets their needs. They will make all schools better, reduce class size and guard against a tax increase.

Vote YES on Citizen's State Referendum 1 to support the scholarship law and every family's right to choose the best educational fit for their children.